



Wisconsin state veterinarian continues ban on spring fair pig weigh-ins

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MADISON – To continue protecting Wisconsin’s pork industry from the spread of a deadly, communicable virus among pigs, Dr. Paul McGraw, state veterinarian at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is reissuing a ban on the spring pig weigh-ins that usually take place in preparation for Wisconsin’s numerous county fairs. McGraw also recommends only terminal swine shows be held given the concerns regarding the spread of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv), Porcine Reproductive Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), and influenza.

“The precautions we took last year helped keep our infection rates down in Wisconsin, so I want to make sure that continues,” McGraw said. For example, Wisconsin has had 7 known positive cases of PEDv since the virus was first found in the U.S. pig population in 2013. Only two cases have been reported since the mandatory reporting requirement went into effect in June 2014. Meanwhile, industry analysts estimate more than eight million swine nationwide have died from PEDv alone in the same time period.

Banning spring weigh-ins is a crucial step toward minimizing the effect of PEDv, PRRS and influenza on Wisconsin pork producers. In addition, McGraw still recommends that fairs hold terminal shows, where pigs go to slaughter after the show. It is completely up to the counties to develop plans locally with locker plants and slaughter facilities to make this work for them.

“We have a very active fair season here in Wisconsin, so it’s important that we take all the disease transmission risks into consideration—this is not just about PEDv,” McGraw says. “The only safe way to control these diseases is to ensure that the pigs comingled at fairs and shows are sent directly to slaughter.”

Swine farmers are encouraged to use proper biosecurity methods, including washing trucks and trailers between loads, washing boots and clothing, and establishing a line of separation between clean and dirty areas. The National Pork Board has developed a wide variety of biosecurity information that is free and available at www.pork.org.

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